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**Breakout Session “Counter-Narratives to Cyberextremism through Apps and Video Games”**

**Background**

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have experienced extraordinary developments over the past twenty-five years. We are witnessing, and indeed participating as well, in a communications revolution not seen in scale and outcomes since the normalization of printing five hundred years ago. It could be argued that, in fact, the current ICT innovations far outpace the printing revolution. For most of us almost all of our activities are indeed channeled, framed, registered, etc. by the global ICT digital environment. So it is then of paramount importance that we consider what role and what contributions, ICT can bring to peace-building and inclusion efforts and initiatives.

ICT are particularly relevant as peace-building enablers because they facilitate civic engagement, providing opportunities where existing conflicts are not denied but are transformed into digital platforms that can ultimately deliver face-to-face dialogue, aiming at deeper understanding and peaceful political compromises. The enormous capacity that ICT have for shaping the emotional thinking and behavior of individuals is well known. Let's simply point out the well thought-out efforts of all stakeholders (all, including the ones exacerbating conflicts) put into social media messaging. They often spin narratives of conflict, misinformation, hate speech, and all forms of polarizing messages that too frequently end in violent confrontations.

But ICT has also the capacity to empower counter-narratives and to support efforts for the better understanding among individuals of different cultural and religious backgrounds. ICT are, in fact, strong sources for inclusion and dialogue strengthening peace-building processes. Gamified apps and video games can also be peace-building opportunities; many are in fact innovative examples of new ways to facilitate inclusion, deterring racism and all forms of hateful expressions towards minorities.

Policy makers need to take stock of the opportunities that ICT hold towards peace-building and support its multiple developments and implementation across society, from formal educational settings to social programs to initiatives specifically designed for sectors of their communities with particular needs regarding inclusion and civic participation.

**Points of Discussion**

- What concrete examples of good practices of ICT for peace-building can be highlighted?
- How could educational institutions and governments support ICT peace-building initiatives?
- How could the private sector support these initiatives?